

USSR

FBIS 29

END OF VIETNAM WAR SHOULD BENEFIT U.S. - SOVIET RELATIONS

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(VLADIMIR AFONIN COMMENTARY)

(TEXT) AMERICAN COMMENTATORS ARE SPECULATING ON THE EFFECT THE END OF THE WAR IN SOUTH VIETNAM WILL HAVE ON DETENTE. IF I WERE ASKED THIS QUESTION I WOULD CERTAINLY SAY THAT IT COULD HAVE A MOST BENEFICIAL EFFECT ON THE EASING OF INTERNATIONAL TENSION FOR THE SIMPLE REASON THAT ONE OF THE WORST HOTBEDS OF WAR HAS BEEN REMOVED. MOST OF THE TIME, FOLLOWING THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, INDOCHINA, AND ESPECIALLY VIETNAM, WERE HOT SPOTS OF THE WORLD. DAILY REPORTS OF BLOODY BATTLES, OF MASS MURDERS, OF DEVASTATION DID NOT LET HONEST MEN AND WOMEN REST AND THE VERY NEWSPAPER STAFF THAT TODAY POSE THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE VICTORY OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT OF SOUTH VIETNAM WILL NOT HARM DETENTE, YESTERDAY WERE QUITE LOGICALLY ASKING THE QUESTION OF HOW THE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN INDOCHINA COULD INFLUENCE THE RELATIONS OF THE GREAT POWERS IN REGARD TO EVENTS ELSEWHERE.

FOR PEACE CANNOT BE DIVIDED. THERE CAN BE NO FIRM GUARANTEE OF SECURITY FOR ONE PART OF THE GLOBE WHILE FIERCE FIGHTING GOES ON IN ANOTHER PART OF THE GLOBE. AND IT IS NOT ACCIDENTAL THAT THE PEACE PROGRAM ADOPTED BY THE 24TH CONGRESS OF THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY, WHOSE IMPLEMENTATION HAS BROUGHT ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF DETENTE TODAY, BEGAN WITH AN APPEAL TO LIQUIDATE THE HOTBED OF WAR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. AND NOW, WITH THE VICTORY OF THE PATRIOTIC FORCES OF SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA, THIS HOTBED HAS BEEN REMOVED.

THE MANY YEARS OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE AGAINST THE STEEPED IN CORRUPTION PUPPET REGIMES HAS ENDED. SOVIET PEOPLE ARE JOYFULLY WELCOMING THESE HISTORIC EVENTS AS AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF THE INVINCIBILITY OF THE MOVEMENT OF THE POPULAR MASSES FOR LIBERTY, FOR INDEPENDENCE, FOR THE RIGHT, INDEPENDENTLY AND JUSTLY, TO RESOLVE THEIR SOCIAL PROBLEMS. AND JUDGING FROM THE REPORTS COMING IN FROM THE WEST, PUBLIC OPINION AS A WHOLE HAS BREATHED EASIER WITH THE END OF THE VIETNAMESE WAR.

IT I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE AMERICANS WHO HAVE COME OUT FOR MANY A YEAR AGAINST THEIR COUNTRY'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN INDCHINA HAVE ALSO HEAVED A SIGH OF RELIEF AND THE UNITED STATES HAS SPENT A PRETTY PENNY ON THIS INVOLVEMENT. A PUBLIC OPINION POLL HELD LATE IN APRIL SHOWED THAT OVER 80 PER CENT OF THOSE ASKED DECLARED THEIR EMPHATIC OPPOSITION TO FRESH ALLICATIONS FOR THE FORMER SAIGON DICTATOR, THIEU. I BELIEVE THAT THEY, AND NOW EVERYBODY, HAVE REALIZED THAT THESE ADDITIONAL ALLICATIONS WOULD NOT HAVE SAVED THE SAIGON ADMINISTRATION.

IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT THE \$ 50 BILLION THAT THE UNITED STATES ALREADY SPENT ONLY PROLONGED THE WAR IN SOUTH VIETNAM, PROLONGED IT FOR MANY YEARS. AND THIS MONEY COULD NOT HAVE LED TO ANY POSITIVE RESULTS, FOR IT WAS SPENT ON PROPPING UP AN ANTIPOPULAR REGIME WHICH IN THE LONG RUN COLLAPSED. POSSIBLY, ADDITIONAL ALLICATIONS COULD HAVE PROLONGED THE LIFE OF THE REGIME FOR SOME TIME, THAT IS, THEY COULD HAVE PROLONGED THE WAR, THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD. BUT THESE ALLICATIONS WERE NOT PASSED AND IT COULD BE SAID THAT IF PEACE HAD COME TO SOUTH VIETNAM TODAY, THIS, TO SOME EXTENT IN PARTICULAR, IS DUE TO THE MAJORITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND VERY MANY OF THE IR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS COMING OUT AGAINST FURTHER INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

THINGS HAVE PROBABLY BECOME QUIETER IN THE UNITED STATES. A FORMER SENATOR, EUGENE MCCARTHY, SAID ON SUNDAY AT A CEREMONY DEVOTED TO THE MEMORY OF THE FOUR STUDENTS KILLED 5 YEARS AGO AT KENT UNIVERSITY: THE CAMPUSES ARE QUIET NOW, A LONG WAR HAS ENDED. AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW, THE STUDENTS WERE SHOT DEAD BY NATIONAL GUARD SMEN DURING ONE OF THE NUMEROUS DEMONSTRATIONS HELD AT THE TIME PROTESTING AGAINST FURTHER AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN INDCHINA.

IT IS ALSO QUIET IN SOUTH VIETNAM. IN SAIGON THE LARGE-SCALE ARRESTS AND BLOOD BATHS THAT MANY AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS HAD DRAMATICALLY FORETOLD DO NOT EXIST. ON THE CONTRARY, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE HAVE WON PEACE AND NOW THEIR OBJECTIVE IS TO ACHIEVE NATIONAL CONCORD AND UNITY IN RENOVATING THEIR COUNTRY, IN HER UPSURGE.

THERE ARE LIKEWISE NO GROUND WHATSOEVER TO THE CONCOCTIONS OF THE WESTERN PRESS ABOUT A POSSIBLE WORSENING OF THE SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS BECAUSE OF THE EVENTS IN INDOCHINA. THE OPPOSITE IS MORE LIKELY. THE END OF THE WAR IN WHICH OUR COUNTRIES SUPPORTED OPPOSING SIDES SHOULD HAVE A BENEFICIAL EFFECT ON THESE RELATIONS, SHOULD STRENGTHEN THE MUTUAL TRUST OF OUR PEOPLES. THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES BEAR A COMMON RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOLVING THE MOST ACUTE PROBLEMS OF TODAY, ABOVE ALL IN HALTING THE ARMS RACE, IN PREVENTING NUCLEAR WARFARE, IN REALIZING THE PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE.

MUCH HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE IN SOLVING THESE PARAMOUNT TASKS BUT THE PROCESS OF DETENTE IS A CONTINUOUS PROCESS WHICH DEMANDS A FORWARD MOMENTUM ALL THE TIME. THAT'S WHY, WELCOMING THE END OF THE WAR IN SOUTH VIETNAM, WHILE WORKING FOR FIRM SECURITY IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD, WE KEEP ON STRESSING THAT WE ARE DEVOTING THE MOST SERIOUS ATTENTION TO PROMOTING FURTHER OUR COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES. WE STAND FOR A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS, RELATIONS WHICH ARE SO DECISIVE FOR PEACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

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